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Press release: Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement

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The Conference of State Housing Ministers today gave full and detailed consideration to those matters of major significance for extension of the Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement.

To this end the Conference was both unanimous and adamant that an essential ingredient is the availability of maximum funds at minimum interest rates.

It was unanimously agreed that such interest rate should not exceed 4% and should remain at that figure for the whole of the period of any such Agreement.

The provision of funds at such an interest rate is vital to any Agreement that purports to be the means of providing adequate housing for lower and middle income families.

Provision of funds on the proposed basis will enable Australia to say to these people: "We can provide the houses you need at a price you can afford."

The Conference was also adamant that the requirement in the present Agreement that 5% of the funds advanced to the States for the provision of housing by the State be used in the erection of dwellings specifically for serving members of the defence forces should be deleted from any future Agreement on the basis that the Commonwealth should provide the total of the money required for service housing as part and parcel of the defence commitment. The States would, however, be fully prepared to continue to erect, maintain and manage such dwellings for serving members as the Commonwealth may seek to have built in agreed areas and is prepared to finance.